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130731Z Sep 05

UNCLAS LAGOS 001416

SIPDIS

DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAYE
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENANDER
DOC FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION MARAD
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ
STATE PASS EX-IM FOR JRICHTER AND KVRANICH
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND JEDWARDS
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT AND BTERNET

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [EPET](#) [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN LABOR CONGRESS ABBREVIATES RALLY PLANS

REF: A) LAGOS 1398 B) LAGOS 1397 C) LAGOS 1377 D)

LAGOS 1376 E) LAGOS 1350 F) ABUJA 1153

¶1. The NLC held a press conference September 12 to discuss the protest rally planned for Lagos September 14. They are now calling for a more modest demonstration than reported in ref A. The schedule of demonstrations has also been abbreviated, with the next venue being Benin City on September 15 and the last Abuja on September 30. NLC sources said they notified the police, but because of the new July protest law (reported in ref E), they did not have to ask for official permission to hold the protest. So far, the police claim they will abide by the law and will not interfere.

¶2. The rally will begin between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. at the National Stadium in Surulere. Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka will be the keynote speaker, and other noted activists, including Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, will follow. Media reported that Chief Frederick Fasehun, putative chairman of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC), a militant Yoruba group known for inciting violence, would participate. Fasehun is the leader of the wing of the OPC that, at least publicly, renounces violence. However, despite Fasehun's public statement, NLC officials said they refused the OPC's request to take part in the rally. Allowing the OPC and its checkered reputation a place in the protest would provide law enforcement a convenient excuse to blame organizers should any disturbance occur.

¶3. After the speeches, participants will march to the Ikeja district of Lagos and from there to Alausa, site of the governor's office. NLC President Adams Oshiomhole along with others will deliver a letter protesting fuel prices, salary levels, various acts of government corruption, and the GON's failure to fix broken oil refineries. NLC expects the rally to end by 2:00 p.m. and that there will be several thousand participants.

¶4. The GON has not yet contacted the NLC for further talks, but the Ministry of Labor will meet with other government officials and representatives of the Michael Imoudou Institute for Labor Studies (MIILS) on Wednesday, September 14 to discuss the GON's next steps. While they have not met directly with union leaders again, the GON has publicly asked that the rallies be cancelled. As of September 9, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) received its recognition of status as a central labor organization and peer of the NLC, and so any future meeting between GON and union representatives will probably include both TUC and the NLC.

BROWNE